



**U.S. Embassy Madrid
Message for U.S. Citizens**

A July 4th Voting Reminder

13 July 2012

Happy 4th of July! U.S. citizens around the globe will soon mark the 236th anniversary of our Nation's Independence Day with family and community gatherings, food, and fireworks. For U.S. citizens living outside the United States, the 4th of July is an opportunity for all of us, regardless of political affiliation, to celebrate our shared values as citizens of the United States of America.

Have a say in our country's future. One of our most treasured values is the right and the privilege to vote – to participate actively in our country's democratic process. This November, U.S. citizens will elect a President, a Vice President, one-third of the Senate, and the entire House of Representatives. The U.S. Embassy in Spain encourages all U.S. citizens to participate in this year's elections, and stands ready to help you vote.

Almost all overseas U.S. citizens can vote. Twenty-two states and the District of Columbia now allow adult children who have never resided in the United States to vote using their parents' state of voting residence. Details are available on the FVAP website at <http://www.fvap.gov/reference/nvr-res.html>.

Register and request a ballot. To vote, new laws require you to complete and submit a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) this calendar year. The FPCA allows you to register to vote and request an absentee ballot. If you haven't yet done so, we urge you to do so now. The easiest way to complete it is online at www.FVAP.gov. Depending on your State's rules, you then send it to your local election officials electronically or by mail.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: New absentee voting laws are in effect for the 2012 elections. You may no longer automatically receive ballots based on a previous absentee ballot request. All U.S. citizens outside the United States who want to vote by absentee ballot in U.S. elections should complete a new Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) every year. States are now required to send out ballots 45 days before an election. No matter what State you vote in, you can now ask your local election officials to provide your blank ballots to you electronically (by email, internet download, or fax, depending on your State). You can now also confirm your registration and ballot delivery online. Be sure to include your email address on the form to take advantage of the electronic ballot delivery option. This is the fastest and most reliable way to receive your ballot on time, and we strongly recommend every voter take advantage of it. Learn more at the Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP) website at www.FVAP.gov.

Mailing guidance. Print out the completed FPCA and the (U.S.) postage-paid envelope containing the address of your local election officials. You can drop off the postage-paid envelope (containing your FPCA) at the [Embassy, Consulate General in Barcelona](#) or any of the [Consular Agencies in Spain](#) and we will mail it back home for you without the need to pay international postage. You can expect your FPCA to reach its destination in 2 weeks when dropped at the Embassy or 3 weeks for all other locations. If it's easier for you to use Spain's postal system, be sure to affix sufficient international postage and allow sufficient time for international mail delivery.

Need help? Please contact the Embassy at VoteMadrid@state.gov or +34-91-587-2240 or visit one of our [offices](#). (NOTE: It is acceptable for private U.S. citizens or U.S. citizens' groups to collect FPCAs and deliver them to the Embassy, Consulate General or agency on behalf of other eligible voters, as long as each FPCA is in its own U.S. postage-paid envelope.)

Make your vote count! Follow your State's absentee voting procedures carefully. Send in your FPCA before the registration deadline. When you get your ballot, vote and mail it promptly so it reaches local election officials by your State's absentee ballot receipt deadline.

Questions? If you have any questions about registering to vote, please contact U.S. Embassy Madrid's Voting Assistance Officer at VoteMadrid@state.gov or +34-91-587-2240 and be sure to visit www.FVAP.gov.

For the latest security information, U.S. citizens living and traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department's [Bureau of Consular Affairs website](#), where the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Alerts, Travel Warnings, and health-information resources can be found. Up-to-date information on security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the U.S. and Canada. Callers outside the U.S. and Canada may call a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays.)

We encourage U.S. citizens living or traveling abroad to enroll in the Department of [State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#). By enrolling, U.S. citizens make it easier for the U.S. Embassy or Consulate to contact them in case of emergency. U.S. citizens without Internet access may register directly with the appropriate U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

Following is the contact information of our Embassy in Madrid. Contact numbers and addresses for all our offices is also available on [our website](#).

U.S. Embassy Madrid
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